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# Message from the President

**W**elcome to the Winter issue of *Stringendo*! By the time you are reading this, our new **ASTA MD/DC Chapter website** is up and running. Please have a look: [www.asta.net](http://www.asta.net). Plan to visit it frequently so you can have news of our Chapter's events and members. Infinite thanks go to Website Coordinator Lorraine Combs and to the Website Committee members, Laurien Laufman, Mark Pfannschmidt, Lya Stern and myself.

There have been many things happening in our chapter! First of all, a few members of the Board have been pulled to become Executive Committee members. The Executive Committee votes on important chapter issues and consists of the Officers (myself, Cathy Stewart, Jean Provine, Jaque Lyman and Sarah Cotterill) plus Lya Stern, Lorraine Combs, Cindy Swiss, Leah Kocsis, Mark Pfannschmidt and Kimberley McCollum. We also welcome our new Membership Chair, Sarah Cotterill. Please see her bio in this issue.

Our Events Chair, Leah Kocsis, as well as the events' chairpersons have been very helpful in getting our three chosen 2008–2009 events underway. They are: 1) A student Solo Festival, set for May 24, 2009. We are partnering with MSMTA (Maryland State Music Teachers Association) for this; 2) Weekday Morning Teacher Enrichment Sessions; 3) a Fiddle Day. Please watch the website for information regarding these events. Leah has also been ingenious in letting all of you with e-mail know of many events of interest to ASTA members using Google Documents.

The University of Maryland School of Music Education's Dr. Bruce Carter got together ten students to inaugurate an ASTA Student Chapter on campus. The first meeting was October 28, 2008. Welcome! Our chapters will be working together on projects and events in the future.

My next big project as President will be to draw all public school strings and orchestra teachers into our chapter so that we can advocate for them, and so they themselves can be informed and tell their students about ASTA MD/DC events. I hope our already active string teaching community can stretch into those parts of Maryland and Washington, D.C. that might benefit from our support.

The ASTA National Conference will be March 18–21, 2009, in Atlanta. I will be going, along with Cathy Stewart, our President-elect. You can register online at [www.astaweb.com](http://www.astaweb.com). It is going to be a truly outstanding conference.

Our MD/DC Chapter General Membership Annual Meeting is scheduled for Sunday, May 17, 2009. All current members are invited. We'll have it in a great venue, i.e., a Chinese restaurant! Details later, but plan on attending!

Have I missed anything? Please let me know! Our next Board meeting is February 22, 2009, so please send me an e-mail or phone me with your ideas, questions or concerns before then. Let our Chapter work for you!

Dorée Huneven

## A Note from the Editor

**W**e have a lot of important information to offer in this issue of *Stringendo*—new Board Members, Solo Strings Festival details, and a list of summer camps—as well as an array of articles, including a student's perspective on *SCOR!*, the adult strings camp, featured at an ASTA Conference session last spring.

If you want to write an article for *Stringendo*, or if you have an idea you would like to see explored in our pages, please let me know ([jslyman@aacc.edu](mailto:jslyman@aacc.edu)). We want the newsletter to serve the Chapter!

Welcome to the new ASTA Student Chapter just born on the University of Maryland campus!

Jaque Lyman

# Solo Strings Festival

## Maryland State Music Teachers Association and ASTA MD/DC Chapter

### To be held on: May 24, 2009

*by Jean Provine*

#### **What Is It?**

For many years the Maryland State Music Teachers Association (MSMTA) has offered its members a spring Solo Strings Festival, giving students of all levels the opportunity to perform a solo piece in the presence of a small group of other players of their age group, parents, and a judge, and to receive useful comments on the performance. This year for the first time, ASTA will join hands with MSMTA in the organization of this event. This means that teachers belonging to either of these organizations will be eligible to enter students.

#### **When, Where, and other Details**

The Festival this year will be held on Sunday, May 24, 2009, at the University of Maryland School of Music, College Park, in its beautiful facilities in the Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center. It is open to violin, viola, and cello students of any level, ages six to eighteen, who study with MSMTA or ASTA members. Students are invited to perform one or two compositions for a small audience and judge. Each scheduled session groups together five to ten performers of the same instrument and similar age, and students play their selections for an audience normally consisting of the other pupils, their parents, and an appointed teacher/judge who provides written comments. The occasion gives all the participants a chance to meet students and parents from other places, and, of course, to hear them play. Parents and participants are also encouraged to stay and listen to the sessions scheduled after theirs. There are two entry categories: Competitive, for which the repertoire must be played by memory and a 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and honorable mention may be awarded within each session; and Non-competitive, where memorization is optional and students will receive comments only. A comment sheet for each performance will be sent to teachers.

#### **A Joint Effort**

Most of the organization of groups, mailings, publicity and paperwork, and the hiring of venue and judges, and handling of countless other details for the Festival are managed by co-chairs Cecylia Barczyk and Jean Provine, and a small committee of helpful ASTA and MSMTA members. However, on the day many other hands will be needed. To this end, all teachers who enter students are asked to contribute in some small way, for example, to greet people at the door, stuff envelopes, help in the rooms as monitors or judge. These assignments will be emailed to participating teachers soon after the April 11, 2009 deadline.

#### **Application**

Applications are due by April 11, 2009. The form is downloadable from [www.asta.net](http://www.asta.net) on the OTHER PROGRAMS page. The application form is also printed on the next page. ASTA members should also receive forms by mail, and MSMTA members will find the details and applications in the Events Handbook. Before mailing the application, please save us a lot of work by being sure the information is complete, including your accompanist details!

#### **Summary**

For teachers, this is a great opportunity to meet other area teachers and their students. For students, this provides a friendly performance venue, perhaps a chance to run through a piece prior to another performance or to have a second run-through of a previous performance, or a just a reason to perfect a piece and feel part of a larger musical community. As the Festival grows we hope to make good use of the gathering together of so many string players to include other features such as workshops and master classes. So bring your pupils and help this event grow!



# Spring Festival: Solo String Instruments

## MSMTA and ASTA MD/DC Chapter

CECYLIA BARCZYK, co-chair, 410-704-2838, cbarczyk@towson.edu  
JEAN PROVINE, co-chair, 301 927 5312, jean.provine@gmail.com

**Date:** Sunday, May 24, 2009  
**Application deadline:** April 11, 2009  
**Location:** University of Maryland, College Park; Music Department,  
Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center  
**Time:** TBA  
**Fee:** \$20 per entry

*Entering teacher should send one check for all entries, made payable to MSMTA, to:*

**JEAN PROVINE, 4611 Beechwood Road, College Park MD 20740**

**Eligibility:** Students through 12th grade, age 6 and above, as of March 1, 2009.  
*First Place winners from last year may enter competitively.*

**Time Limits:**

Ages 6–8	4 minutes (6 and 7-year-olds must enter as non-competitive participants)
Ages 9–10	6 minutes
Ages 11–12	7 minutes
Ages 13 and up	10 minutes

**Procedure:** The following rules apply to this festival:

1. Teachers are not allowed to accompany their own students.
2. Competitive students must perform from memory and have an original part for the judge.
3. Non-competing students may play from music and provide the judge with an original part if possible.
4. In competitive events, 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and Honorable Mention may be awarded. The judge's decisions are final and not open to discussion.
5. The judge's comments of each performance will be sent to the teacher.

*The general rules governing MSMTA events also apply.  
Please read them carefully: [www.msmta.org](http://www.msmta.org) (under Student Activities)*

**Spring Festival: Solo String Instruments**  
**MSMTA and ASTA MD/DC Chapter**  
**Application Form**

This application should be filled out by an MSMTA or ASTA member teacher. Each teacher should send only one check for all entries, made payable to MSMTA, postmarked by April 11, 2009, to **JEAN PROVINE, 4611 Beechwood Road, College Park, MD 20740**

PLEASE PRINT OR TYPE. Be sure to complete all information.

Instrument:     Violin                       Viola                       Cello  
                   Competitive                       Noncompetitive (Last year's winner may enter competitively)

Name of student: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Birthdate: \_\_\_\_\_

Accompanist name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

For scheduling purposes: Please list any time restrictions affecting you or your accompanist: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Compositions (either 1 or 2) to be performed**

*Please list all information such as opus, key, movement, etc.*

*If the piece is from a collection, please identify the name of the collection.*

*You may not change the program after the application deadline. Be sure to include all teacher information.*

Composer	Title	Movement	Performance time
1. _____	_____	_____	_____
2. _____	_____	_____	_____

Teacher's name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

I hereby acknowledge that I have read and understand the rules governing this event and agree to abide by them. My students and/or parents have also been apprised of the rules. **I understand that I must be available to assist with the event, either on the day or before or after.** If I fail to fulfill my work obligation, I understand and agree that my students may be declared ineligible to participate.

Teacher's signature: \_\_\_\_\_

# Summer Music Camps

compiled by the Maryland Classic Youth Orchestras

## Maryland

### AACC Summer Music Academy

June 22–26, 2009

9:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M. (extended care available)

Held at Anne Arundel Community College, Arnold, MD.

Grades 6–12, winds, strings, percussion, and voice welcome.

Focus on performance through chamber music, large ensemble playing, music theory, group lessons, private lessons, and master classes.

Faculty includes members of the AACC music faculty and the Annapolis Chamber Players.

More information: 410-349-1856; www.

AnnapolisChamberPlayers.org

### CCE FiddleWeek

A week-long traditional Irish camp held the third or fourth week of July.

Mitch Fanning Director, CCE FiddleWeek:

[jmitchellf@yahoo.com](mailto:jmitchellf@yahoo.com)

<http://www.ccepotomac.org>; 301-565-3657

### Frederick Community College Bass Camp

Frederick, MD

[vlfleming@frederick.edu](mailto:vlfleming@frederick.edu); 301-922-0398

Day camp for double bassists with a focus on intensive study of repertoire, technique, sight reading and ensemble performance, working with conservatory-trained master teachers.

Ages: open to all levels

Dates: July 8–11, 2009

### Heifetz International Music Institute

Ellicott City, MD; 410-480-8007; www.

[heifetzinstitute.org](http://heifetzinstitute.org)

Summer Address: 80 Academy Drive, Wolfeboro, NH 03894. Phone 603-569-7497

Six week residential camp for intermediate and advanced students of violin, viola, cello, and piano held in Wolfeboro, NH. Two private lessons per week combined with unique classes in voice, public speaking, freedom of expression, movement, and drama.

Dates: June 26–August 8, 2009

Ages: 14–26

### International Music Institute and Festival USA

Emmitsburg, Maryland

The main objective of the International Music Institute and Festival-USA (IMIF-USA) is to provide an effective educational and performing environment for talented and motivated young musicians under the guidance of internationally renowned teachers/artists. IMIF-USA (formerly IMIC) has assisted young musicians in reaching their personal and musical goals. [www.intermusearts.org/imif](http://www.intermusearts.org/imif)

### Landon School

Bethesda, MD; 301-320-1044; [www.landon.net](http://www.landon.net)

Three separate music day camps: String Ensemble, Jazz Camp, and Band Camp.

*String Orchestra Camp and Band Camp: No audition required.*

Grades 5–12. 1-week sessions, June 22–26, 2009

Two programs: string orchestra and separate band camp. Small ensembles, leading to concert mid-day Friday. Very advanced students may also have opportunity to participate in an advanced string ensemble.

*Jazz Camp: Audition required for ensemble placement.*

For players of saxophone, trombone, trumpet, guitar, piano, bass, drums, and vibes.

Grades 7–12. July 20–24, 2009

Sessions on fundamentals, concepts and sight-reading, jazz lectures, videos, private lessons, master classes, sectionals, and improvisations. Opportunity to play with professional musicians.

### Maryland Summer Centers for Gifted and Talented Students

Center for the Fine and Performing Arts, Salisbury State University, Salisbury, MD; 410-548-4777

[www.marylandpublicschools.org/summercenters](http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/summercenters)

Residential experience for exceptional string, wind, brass and percussion students. Emphasis on concepts, skills, and aesthetic/creative awareness. Audition and interview required.

Grades 7–12.

Individual, small ensemble, large group settings.

Also, field trips to such places as performing arts facilities and visits by guest artists (musicians, actor/comedians, storytellers) providing workshops and evening performances.

### **Maryland Summer Centers for Gifted and Talented Students**

Upper Chesapeake Center for the Arts,  
Washington College,  
Chestertown, MD; 410-996-5424  
<http://www.marylandpublicschools.org>  
Residential experience using a comprehensive approach to musicianship to provide the basis for a total understanding of the selected repertoire. Experiences go much beyond regular performance experiences and strive to develop independent musicality. Audition required.

Grades 7–12

July 11–25, 2009

Individual, small group, master classes, and full orchestra. Instrumental students play between 5–6 hours each day. All students also take a course in Creativity, in which they are grouped into small interdisciplinary “families” across the arts, and each group develops their own small production. Recreational and social activities directed by college counseling staff are scheduled each day. Artists in Residence and evening enrichment performances; field trip to cultural sites in the Baltimore/Washington area concluding with attending a performance at Toby’s Dinner Theatre in Columbia.

### **McDaniel College**

Westminster, MD; [www.mcdaniel.edu](http://www.mcdaniel.edu)  
Information from Ms. Lynn Fleming at 301-922-0398 or [lynn@lynnflemingstudios.com](mailto:lynn@lynnflemingstudios.com)  
Summer Orchestra Program (strings and winds) and Piano program  
Director: Lynn Fleming  
Conductor: Jason Lee  
Piano: David Kreider  
July 19–25, 2009  
Ages 12–20 Residential and day attendance

### **Montgomery College Summer Dinner Theatre**

Rockville, MD; 301-251-7676; [www.montgomerycollege.edu/summerdinnertheatre/](http://www.montgomerycollege.edu/summerdinnertheatre/)  
Audition required.  
Day program: a college-level course that can be taken for credit or non-credit; high school students can also audition for pit orchestra.  
Ages: high school students are welcome to audition. Information available on February 18, 2009.  
No information about fees.

### **Music and Arts Camp at Wilde Lake**

August 3–7, 2009  
Dr. Joan Spicknall, Director: The Suzuki Music School of Maryland, Inc. (SMSMD)  
<http://www.suzukimusicsschool.com/>  
Summer Camps at Wilde Lake (SCWL)  
P.O. Box 1284  
Columbia, MD 21044  
410-964-1983

### **National Philharmonic Summer String Institutes**

Bethesda, MD; 301-493-9283 ext. 117  
[www.nationalphilharmonic.org](http://www.nationalphilharmonic.org)  
Summer string institutes for high school and middle school students.  
The National Philharmonic created the Summer String Institutes to nurture the talent and skills of young musicians and to encourage their continued participation in classical music now and throughout their lives. At the Institutes, students perform a variety of orchestral music and have the increasingly rare opportunity to study chamber music literature. The 100 young musicians are selected based on their applications and teacher recommendations, and will study with Maestro Piotr Gajewski, National Philharmonic musicians, and other distinguished faculty. Each week concludes with performances by the student orchestra and student chamber ensembles. Institute activities include:  
Orchestra rehearsals, sectional rehearsals, chamber music coachings, private lessons (two during the week), movement classes, sight-reading and rhythm training (middle school institute).  
Student chamber music concert (Friday afternoon).  
Student orchestra concert (Friday evening).  
To learn more or request an application, contact Predrag Gosta at [pgosta@nationalphilharmonic.org](mailto:pgosta@nationalphilharmonic.org). Dates and location have yet to be determined. Please check [www.nationalphilharmonic.org](http://www.nationalphilharmonic.org) for updates. A limited number of merit-based scholarships are available.

### **National Orchestral Institute**

May 29–June 28, 2009  
A training program for young pre-professional orchestral musicians, the National Orchestral Institute at the University of Maryland School of Music offers an intensive four-week experience in orchestral musicianship and professional development for musicians. [http://www.music.umd.edu/special\\_programs/national\\_orchestral\\_institute/](http://www.music.umd.edu/special_programs/national_orchestral_institute/)

### **Peabody Camp Allegro**

For students in Suzuki Books 1–4

August 10–14, 2009

Location: Peabody Preparatory Towson Campus  
Camp Allegro provides a week of intensive music and related activities. Full orchestra and sectional rehearsals are held throughout the week. Group classes provide the opportunity to refine ensemble skills, perform for others, review and polish known repertoire. Enrichment classes include such topics as dance, art, and world instruments. Note reading and theory classes are divided by age and teach skills through ear-training, music games, and written work. Partial day and full day options available. More information posted shortly at:  
[www.peabody.jhu.edu/campallegro](http://www.peabody.jhu.edu/campallegro)

### **Peabody Chamber Camp**

For string players in grades 5–12

Rebecca Henry and Christian Tremblay, Directors

August 3–7, 2009, 9:00 A.M.–5:00 P.M.

Peabody Preparatory, Towson Campus

[www.peabody.jhu.edu/chambercamp](http://www.peabody.jhu.edu/chambercamp)

Application deadline: April 15, 2009

Peabody Chamber Camp is a one-week intensive chamber music program for string players in grades 5–12 at the Intermediate to Advanced levels.

Advanced groups rehearse four hours per day, and Intermediate groups rehearse in the morning and have Chamber Camp Orchestra in the afternoon. Participants are grouped into string quartets, quintets or trios and assignments and music will be sent by mid-June. Final concert in the Towson Auditorium on Friday, August 7, 2009, at 3:00 P.M.

### **Summer Bass Workshop**

Albert Einstein High School, Silver Spring, MD

July 6–10, 2009

George Vance 301-588-9275, or [www.slavapub.net](http://www.slavapub.net).

Day workshop for bassists and cellists desiring an intense study of the bass with master teachers.

Workshop under direction of George Vance in cooperation with Institut International François Rabbath and the University of Maryland School of Music.

Any ages; parents must attend with children younger than 16.

Master class, bass choir, group lesson, participatory lecture/demo, concert.

### **University of Maryland, College Park, MD**

[http://www.music.umd.edu/special\\_programs/](http://www.music.umd.edu/special_programs/)

Band Camp: July 19–24, 2009

Orchestra Camp: July 26–31, 2009

Registration begins Feb. 1, 2009. Check the website for up-to-date information.

Summer Term: Twelve weeks total, six sessions.

Registration begins February 2009. Offerings in Music, Music Education and Ethnomusicology.

Courses for majors and non-majors, including CORE offerings.

### **Wildwood Summer Theatre**

Bethesda, MD; 301-530-6422; <http://www.wst.org/index.htm>

Day program, meeting primarily in the evenings. All-youth summer theatre with pit orchestra. Auditions on Memorial Day weekend.

Ages 14–25.

Rehearsal times and dates TBA, once or twice a week early summer, more as show approaches.

## **Virginia**

### **Central Virginia Suzuki Institute**

Sweet Briar College, Sweet Briar, VA 24595.

Residential instruction for students and adults in violin, viola, cello, flute, and piano. Family-oriented. Fees depend upon which institute, age, electives.

Master class, group class, play-in, lessons in a second instrument, electives in folk instruments; recreational facilities include tennis courts, swimming pool, lake swimming, hiking trails.

### **Garth Newel Music Center Summer Chamber Music Fellowship Program**

Warm Springs, VA, 877-558-1689, [www.garthnewel.org](http://www.garthnewel.org)  
Audition required.

Intensive chamber music program for string players and pianists, on a mountain estate with accommodations in a manor house and cottages. Program for seriously dedicated and very motivated music students, receiving coaching at the highest level.

Ages 16–26.

Each fellowship student receives a \$2500 Fellowship Award which covers cost of tuition, room, and board; each pays only a \$100 registration fee.

Coaching, lessons; also, free time for such recreational activities as swimming, horseback riding, and golf.

### **Shenandoah Performing Arts Camp**

Shenandoah University, Winchester, VA; 540-545-7210; <http://www.su.edu/conservatory/>

Pre-camp auditions required only for scholarships; placement auditions held after check-in.

Residential

Grades 6–12 (depending upon Division).

Symphony orchestra, string orchestra, wind ensemble, concert band, harp ensemble, chamber music, jazz camp (1st week only). Private lessons, ensembles, Delcroze Eurhythmics, recitals, and concerts.

### **Wintergreen Summer Music Festival and Academy**

Wintergreen, VA; [www.wintergreenperformingarts.org](http://www.wintergreenperformingarts.org)

The Wintergreen Summer Music Academy offers programs for string players, wind players and composers. The faculty is made up of guest artists and the members of the Wintergreen Festival Orchestra.

## **Washington, D.C.**

### **Greater Washington Suzuki Institute**

Catholic University, Washington, D.C.; [www.sagwa.org](http://www.sagwa.org)  
Week-long day workshop for Suzuki-trained students, chamber classes and string orchestras for non-Suzuki students, at Catholic University.

No ages specified; skill level pre-Twinkle through Book 10 and beyond.

June 24–28, 2009

Fees vary depending on specific choices.

### **Kennedy Center/National Symphony Orchestra Summer Music Institute**

Washington, D.C.

<http://www.kennedy-center.org/nso/nsoed/smi/>

Four-week festival of orchestral and chamber music for young people from all over the nation.

Ages 15–20. June 29–July 27, 2009

Application deadline: January 20, 2009

### **Levine School of Music**

Washington, D.C.; 202-686-8000; [www.levineschool.org](http://www.levineschool.org)  
Several programs and various day camps are offered at campuses in Maryland, D.C., and Virginia. Camps listed below are the ones most relevant to orchestral students; additional camps are also offered for young children, saxophone, electric guitar, jazz, rock, saxophone, percussion, and singers. There are also

opportunities for teen apprenticeships to serve as aides for camp for younger children. Limited number of positions for rising 7th graders and up, a few stipends available for qualified 16+ year olds.

Fiddle Camp: dates and location TBA, check website.

String Camp: Ages: 8–13

August 3–7, 2009, 10 A.M.–4 P.M. (NW DC campus)

Chamber music coaching, master classes, large ensemble, theory, special events with guest artists, solo recitals.

Strings Plus: Ages 12–18

August 10–14, 2009, 10 A.M. to 4:30 P.M. (NW DC campus)

Extension and expansion of String Camp, for string players and pianists. Audition required.

## **Pennsylvania**

### **“Chamber music in Grantham: Performance and Composition”**

A one-week intensive program designed to enhance participants’ abilities to effectively communicate musical ideas in performance. The program was founded by the Mendelssohn Piano Trio and Richard Roberson, Dean of the School of the Arts at Messiah College in Grantham, Pennsylvania. It is open to performers and composers ages 16 and older, although exceptions are made for highly advanced younger participants. Past guest artists include Ronald Leonard, Earl Carlyss, Ann Schein, and Jody Gatwood. This year’s program will take place on August 7–14, 2009. For more information please visit [http://www.messiah.edu/departments/music/chamber\\_music\\_workshop.shtml](http://www.messiah.edu/departments/music/chamber_music_workshop.shtml) or email [psirotin@messiah.edu](mailto:psirotin@messiah.edu)

### **The Cellospeak 9th Annual Cello Workshop for Adults**

Dorothy Amarandos, Artistic Director and Gary Fitzgerald, Conductor

To be held at Wilson College in Chambersburg, Pennsylvania, from July 26–August 1, 2009.

The workshop is an intensive 6-day seminar in a uniquely supportive environment for adult cellists from novice to advanced. Participants improve technical skills, experience playing in ensembles, and enjoy performances by the virtuoso faculty (teaching in a ratio of 1 faculty for every 4 students). The daily schedule includes: private lessons, coached quartets, group technique sessions, and the all-inclusive cello

choir of 60 voices. Registrations will be accepted between January 15–March 15, 2009. For full program information, directions, and a downloadable application form, please visit our web site at: [www.cellospeak.com](http://www.cellospeak.com).

**Gettysburg Chamber Music Workshop**

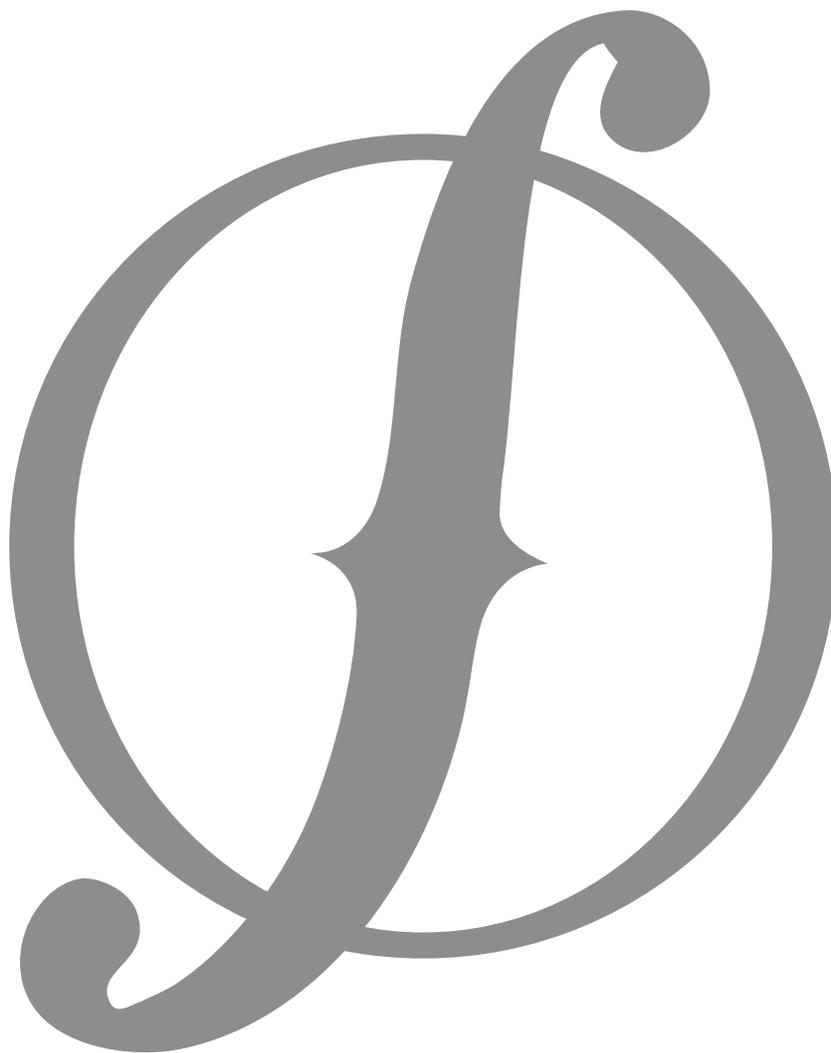
June 12–16, 2009

A workshop designed for college-age and above

string players; enrollment limited to 40 persons from which 10 quartets will be formed.

Faculty: Robert Battey, cello, Doug Wolters, cello, Melissa Ruof, violin/viola, Carl Iba, violin/viola, and Norman Nunamaker, violin/viola, and Director of the Workshop

Contact person: Norman Nunamaker, 717-334-5508; or [nkncrn@comcast.net](mailto:nkncrn@comcast.net)



# My Reflections on William Pleeth, Cellist (1916-1999)

by Jeff Schoyen

The teaching profession has offered me a wonderful opportunity to reflect on my different teachers and how they taught me. Very recently, I was thinking about how my students are involved in so many different activities, and how they often come to lessons unprepared. My usual way to deal with this kind of student was to begin to re-teach the material from the previous week. But one day this semester I grew tired of teaching this way, and I began to think of how I could possibly inspire my students to be more devoted to the cello. I immediately thought of my “inspirational” teacher, William Pleeth. How did he inspire me to be so excited about the cello? Could my students, with their often limited cello time, be inspired like I was? So I began reflecting on my lessons with the cellist and pedagogue, William Pleeth.

William Pleeth was born in 1916 and died in London in 1999. He was a very successful cellist but was mainly known for being a great teacher whose students included Jacqueline Dupre and many others. When I was preparing to leave for London, I was aware that he was a great teacher and, in fact, I had heard things that suggested that he was “inspirational.” What I didn’t know at the time was that he would inspire me in many different areas—musical ideas, style, technique, and chamber music, just to name a few.

Before looking into the ways that Mr. Pleeth inspired his students, I first have to admit that he had a very optimistic and infectious outlook on life. One felt it right away. In the forward to Pleeth’s book, *Cello*, Jacqueline Dupre writes, “I had heard him play at a concert and been deeply moved. Now that I was actually to see him face to face I wondered what sort of man he would be. Wonderful, like his playing? Or remote and aloof—very much the great artist—who would not have time or interest in his new child pupil? I need not have worried. His warm, welcoming personality soon put all my doubts at rest and, in that first hour, we managed to explore a lot of musical territory, and a lot about ourselves.”

In my experience as well, Mr. Pleeth was always welcoming, optimistic, and ready to explore. I can

remember one lesson on the Debussy Sonata when he said, “Jeffrey, your cello has to sound like a bass flute there!” Of all things, he picked the bass flute! But why not? It made an impression on me that I’ve never forgotten. Another such moment was when I was playing an Allemande to one of the Bach Suites. Most of the Allemandes cadence about one measure before the end of the piece and sort of trail off, yet I was playing intensely the music after the cadence as if it were very important material. Mr. Pleeth asked me if I had heard any Thomas Tallis and I said “Oh yes.” He then reminded me of how Tallis would come to the end of a piece and cadence, yet one or two very florid lines would continue for a while before coming to rest. He said this was in effect what Bach was doing in these Allemandes. Pleeth’s ability to draw me into his world of musical imagination had worked again, and I have never forgotten that moment—nor played the Allemandes the same since.

Concerning musical style, Mr. Pleeth always had very strong opinions, and they were well founded. He was well aware of the movement in historical performance since his son, Anthony Pleeth, is an eminent baroque cellist. In Bach Mr. Pleeth would often have a student play a passage with all separate bows in order for the student to see a musical shape before adding a bowing to it. This worked particularly well for passages that had a traditional bowing that may not have been stylistic. For instance, the Prelude to the G-Major Suite was often performed, at least then, with eight notes to a bow. By playing it with separate bows, the student could more clearly see the shape and in the process moved closer to a more stylistically correct bowing. Mr. Pleeth sometimes would refer to a “bowed legato” for fast detaché passages. This is basically an on-the-string stroke that violinists do all the time. So a piece like the Prelude to the Cello Suite in C Major would have a very similar stroke to the E Major Violin Preludium.

Concerning Beethoven, Mr. Pleeth was a stickler about the cellist being articulate enough with the bow. His thought was that the pianist made sound with a very definite beginning, and in many passages

the cello needed to do that as well. And if Beethoven wrote a long slur over a piano line, the cello should try to do that as well, at least in effect, when playing the same line. Pleeth also felt very strongly about the cellist and pianist (in sonatas) being equal partners. He never encouraged cellists to play sonatas from memory because, after all, the pianist would probably use music. Also, Pleeth felt very strongly against the use of long, showy cadenzas, saying “do you think that you could do a better job than Haydn did here by writing a long cadenza?” He reacted against many modern editions, in particular the ones that overused slurs that weren’t in the original. He wasn’t afraid to voice his strong opinions about style, and he gave the impression that here was a musician who cared deeply about the composer’s intentions.

In hindsight, Pleeth wasn’t an overtly “technical” teacher. In fact, he liked to approach technique through the music, sometimes asking me to come up with five different fingerings for a passage. He stressed that in order to serve the music, we shouldn’t always choose the most convenient fingering. And he enjoyed saying “you won’t find that in the technique books.” But as far as traditional technique was concerned, he had some firm beliefs. He believed in having an angled left hand, using the analogy of a man with one leg longer than the other, walking smoothly if one leg was in the “gutter” and one on the sidewalk. He demonstrated the release in shifting by holding his Strad cello by the neck with his left hand and letting it quickly slip through his hand. These demonstrations and analogies are hard to forget! Sometimes he would have me bow with only the first finger and thumb in order to get me to realize the importance of the first finger in producing a sound. I can see now that he preferred example and experimentation over explanation. He never talked about pronation or supination of the forearm, for example. At that time in my development I was very concerned about my bow changes, and I believe he thought I was thinking too much about them. He said, “just change directions!” And sometimes he would circumnavigate technical issues altogether by getting me to look out the window or talk to him while playing. He felt that often students didn’t trust their own abilities, and by being distracted, they couldn’t overwork a passage or interfere with it mentally.

Concerning the teaching of beginners, Pleeth had some great ideas, and most of them are in his book.

First of all, the photos in the book are great. I refer to them often, and I show them to my students. There are photos of the set-up, and explanations concerning why not to choose a particular way to hold the cello. He was a proponent of the cello being slightly angled in toward the center of the body. After experimenting for years with different ways to hold the cello (I’m well over six feet tall), I’ve come back to Pleeth’s way because it allows my spine to be comfortable and straight. He also discusses the “baroque bow hold” for beginners and when to use it. He definitely didn’t like the use of tapes on the fingerboard. I once asked him how he taught vibrato to a young child. Here again he bypassed explanation and said he would first have the child place his/her hand over his while he vibrated. I’ve used this method, and it’s a very good way to start, without too much talking. He also believed in giving the beginner free experimentation time, encouraging the student to do glissandi, bow behind the bridge, etc. His book also has a fantastic section for parents. It is a guide to how parents can be supportive without getting in the way.

William Pleeth would inspire by using colorful language, by showing passion for a particular topic, and by getting the student to experience success without a lot of technical discussion. He also had a very human side that he once showed to me after I arrived at a lesson. I had taken a cab to his house for a lesson and on the way had almost gotten into an accident. Wearing no seatbelt, I was tossed around with my cello in the cab. I was still shaken when I began to tune my cello for the lesson. He asked what had happened and I told him about the near accident. He was very concerned immediately, and in fact offered me a glass of Scotch! On another occasion at a festival in Prussia Cove, I was taking a walk and came upon Mr. Pleeth watching a seagull hover just over the nearby cliff. He was fascinated by this seagull and invited me to join him in watching it. Here he was being a teacher again, not with a cello in his hands, but still inspiring me towards a deep curiosity and a love for learning.



*Jeff Schoyen is the Eastern Shore Co-Representative for MD/DC Chapter. Read his bio on our new website: [www.asta.net](http://www.asta.net), on the Officers and Board of Directors page.*

# SCOR! Scores Big for a Local Adult Violin Student

by Kimberly McCollum

**A**s a violin teacher who has researched and implemented various techniques for teaching adult beginners, I was particularly excited after attending a session at the ASTA National Conference last February on the adult string camp, *SCOR!* (String Camp of Rochester). I immediately went home to Annapolis and started thinking of ways to get some of my adult students interested in a string camp experience.

One adult student that immediately came to mind was David Henry. David, now sixty-four years old, began his musical life under the direction of his grandmother, Eileen Henry, when he was five years old. She was a talented musician and played the harp, cello, piano, and the violin. His father was a violinist and played until he was in his late teens. When David was ten, his family moved from New York City to a small Ohio town, where he studied the violin for three years. The second teacher he had during this time died from leukemia, and that event ended his instruction on the violin. By this time he was thirteen years old, and football and other extracurricular activities took priority. David continued to have an interest in music, singing in high school vocal ensembles and playing the tuba in the school band. He did not actively play the violin again until he was sixty-three. After a fifty-year break and finally retiring from the ministry, he returned to lessons.

David eagerly took the *SCOR!* brochure and registered right away. He even recruited his cellist friend, Mark, to join him for the four-day getaway. Before he departed, I asked David if he would take along some interview questions to think about while he was at the camp. He agreed to share his experience at *SCOR!* this past July.

KM: Did you have any specific goals that you wanted to accomplish?

DH: I had no specific goals. I wanted to meet new people and to enjoy playing, and maybe thereby become a better player.

KM: Tell me about how you spent your individual practice time.

DH: My practice time was in the evening, after 8:30 or 9:00 p.m. I played music with Mark and then we invited one of our neighbors to come along, so we had a trio. The music we played on the first night was our duet music. Ron, the violist in our quartet, could read treble clef, so he played the alto part in our hymns and played the violin part in our duet music. We also ran through the *SCOR!* orchestra pieces, "Last Spring" (Grieg), "Libedke Hunga" and "Awakening" (O'Neil). The second night, we included another cellist. A lady heard us playing, grabbed her violin and her first violin music, and joined us in working on our music, the Brandenburg Concerto No. 3, First Movement. The third evening as we practiced the Brandenburg, another lady dropped her bag at our door, ran down the hall to get her fiddle, and played the second violin part with me. She was helpful with some of the spots that I was having trouble with. We also rehearsed the other orchestra pieces.

KM: Did you attend any faculty recitals or master classes?

DH: We were presented with two faculty recitals. There were two master classes, the Advanced and General tracks. I did not attend the Advanced Master Class. Our quartet played for the General Track master class and was critiqued and used as a teaching vehicle by our coach, Pam, who is a professor of cello at the Eastman School of Music. Thursday night was a cello recital, presented by Brian Hodges, accompanied by his wife, Betsi Hodges. Brian is an accomplished cellist. He covered a range of emotions in the three pieces that he played: Beethoven's Sonata in F Major for Cello and Piano, op. 5, no. 1; Vaughn Williams' *Six Studies in English Folk Songs*; and Grieg's Sonata in A Minor, op. 36. He showed great technical skill, but also mixed emotions wonderfully, particularly in the second movement

of the Beethoven. His Vivace was very lively, wonderfully accented, and showed the full expression of his own passion. Friday night's recital was a violin solo, a string trio, and a viola solo. *Tribal Warfare* was composed by Beth Bultman (the director of the camp) and arranged for a trio, which included Beth, her husband, Kyle (viola) and Lisa Caravan (cello). It is an extraordinary piece, contemporary in structure, full of great energy, with some lovely, soft, gentle parts. Sandra Hallaeran played a Samuel Barber sonata. She was a very aggressive player and presented the piece with vigor and energy. The way I described her performance is that I would not want to run into her in a dark alley if she were playing the cello. She was *intense!* As far as I am concerned, although I know little about the cello, she was technically superb, completely concentrated and focused on her performance. She was brilliant.

KM: Describe the *SCOR!* orchestra concerts.

DH: There was a close-of-camp "Un-concert" in order to downplay the anxiety. Three orchestras participated: The Basic Track (Beginners), the General Track (Intermediate), and the Advanced Track. The basic track folks were the most fun. People who had played the cello, violin, or viola for two years down to three months! It was wonderful to hear a bunch of older folks playing and just starting what we all hoped was a long career of making music! The General Track performance didn't go as well in my opinion, but the Advanced Track orchestra was very good. They even had a string bass—a little old lady, of course, who was not able to reach the nut without a stepladder! They did three numbers, one of which was a Gershwin tune, but I can't tell you more about the others, except they were performed well. There were a series of chamber groups, including an older couple who did a piano trio quite nicely and a string quartet from the General Track that was outstanding. They played Bach's Brandenburg Concerto No. 3 and were quite polished, with great composure and stage presence.

KM: What were the ages and experience levels of the other campers?

DH: The camp was nothing but adults, the ages ranged from mid-twenties to eighty-five years of age. Most of the campers seemed to have private teachers,

although my stand-mate, about thirty-five years old, did not. Most of the campers seemed to have connections to orchestras of some kind, but many are alone in the world, playing for their own enjoyment. Only one had obvious physical disabilities. Sam was eighty-one and had been learning the cello for several months. Many of us assisted him in lugging his cello and ditty bag around. The other issue is simply age. Hauling a violin, viola, or cello around when the person is seventy years plus a few is physically demanding. I estimate the average age of the campers to be somewhere in the mid- to late-fifties.

KM: Talk a little about the faculty at *SCOR!*.

DH: The faculty was *outstanding!* Although the teachers were all professional performers, they all seemed to be dedicated to teaching us. They were wonderful, dear people in the way they treated us. For me, the learning was about refining playing. I went to workshops on shifting, playing in tune more effectively, fiddling, and more.

KM: On a scale from 1–10, how would you rate your experience at *SCOR!*?

DH: *SCOR!* rates a 10 for me. The faculty were superb, the weather in upstate New York was wonderful, and the campus was mostly new and easy to negotiate on foot. You don't have to be a track star to get around. The food was a buffet, and the selection was healthy (no fried foods), with lots of milk, soda, and coffee for those of us who needed it. Rehearsal rooms were not handicap-accessible for the most part and were far too warm most of the time, but we just shut up and played! The whole experience was very inspiring and provided hope for a more prosperous musical future for me. I would definitely attend *SCOR!* again!



*SCOR!* is now registering adult students for their July 22–25, 2009 session. For more information about the directors, faculty, and facilities, their website is [www.stringcamp.com](http://www.stringcamp.com).

*Kimberly McCollum is the Violin Forum Chair for MD/DC Chapter. Read her bio on our new website: [www.asta.net](http://www.asta.net), on the Officers and Board of Directors page.*

# Studio Teacher's Self-Examination Checklist

by Dr. Robert Jesselson

*This checklist was the basis of Dr. Jesselson's lecture at the 2008 ASTA National Convention in Albuquerque. It is reprinted here with his permission.*

Rate yourself on the following questions. Your score is for your eyes only!  
So you don't have to feel the need to impress anyone.

## I. Planning the Lesson

1. Do you have a clear idea of your short-term, middle-term, and long-term goals for the student?
2. Do you think about these goals and revise them from week to week?
3. Do you spend some time thinking about your lessons and the students, visualizing yourself in action, imagining your students' possible responses, etc?
4. Do you have a clear idea of your priorities from lesson to lesson?
5. Do you make these priorities clear to your students?
6. Are you aware of the balance of aural, visual and sensory-motor approaches in planning your lesson?
7. Do you experiment with new approaches to old problems (even if they don't always work)?
8. Do you have three or four solutions for the same problem in case the first one does not help the student?
9. Are you planning ahead with several exercises or tricks to help solve a musical problem?
10. Are you coming up with new exercises to solve problems? New metaphors for addressing technical and musical issues?
11. Are you always aware of the technical concepts you are working with?
12. Are you thinking carefully about how to analyze the technical problems you are encountering in your student's playing?
13. Do you practice the music that your students are playing so that you can demonstrate adequately to them?
14. Have you planned clear, step-by-step directions as to how the students should work and practice at home?

15. Do you plan for the lesson ahead of time, or are you winging it?

## II. In the Lesson

1. Do you have a "plan" for a lesson, which might include: Scale/Arpeggios, Exercises, Etudes, Pieces?
2. Are you aware of the "rhythm" of the lesson; are you pacing the lesson correctly?
3. Are you requiring that the student memorize something every week?
4. Are you always working on a variety of things with your students? Left-hand technique and right-hand technique?
5. Are you letting the student play rather than dominating the lesson with your talking?
6. Are you having the student checking notes for intonation?
7. Are you asking the student questions, using the "Socratic method"?
8. Do you check the student's knowledge of key signatures, musical terms, periods of history, etc?
9. Are you only having the student do "playthroughs" of pieces, or are you working on the details?
10. Are you only working on the details, or are you letting the student do "playthroughs" of pieces?
11. Are you praising your student when he/she has done something well, even if it is only a little thing?
12. Are you aware of the different learning styles that people have?
13. Are you aware of accessing the student's Left and Right Brains for technical and musical issues?
14. Are you giving the student too many Left Brain things to think of at one time-overloading him/her?

15. Are you just teaching through the Right Brain and not giving the student the technical information he/she needs?
16. Does the student know his assignment?
17. Has the student practiced? Is he/she prepared?
18. Is the student getting through an adequate amount of material?
19. Is the student progressing from week to week?
20. Is the student keeping a notebook?
21. Are the lessons being held on a regular basis?
22. Are you making up or rescheduling lessons that you had to miss?
23. Is there someone who can take your student if you cannot make up the lesson so he/she does not lose a week's worth of material?
24. Are you communicating with the parents if there is a problem?
25. Does the student feel good about him/herself?
26. Are you clear in your language and your directions?
27. Do you have long-term goals for your students, such as recitals, master classes, performances?
28. Does your student have a clear idea of what is expected from him/her?
29. Do your lessons begin and end on time?
30. How musically are your students playing?
31. Do you cover a lot of material at a comfortable level, or do you get "bogged down" and spend too much time on something?
32. Does your student have enough material to practice-or maybe even too much to do well?
33. If you spent lots of time in the lesson on one detail, will the student "spin his wheels" during the week with material that came into the lesson already prepared but not heard?
34. Do you demonstrate occasionally so the student hears a model of sound, tempo, etc?
35. Do you sometimes throw out all of the above ideas and do something spontaneous?
36. Do you spend time in the lesson discussing practicing, sometimes even "pretending" that they are practicing to see how they work on a problem?
37. In other words, do you make them independent of you rather than dependent on you as their teacher?
38. Are you prepared to "pass them on" to the next teacher when you feel that you have nothing more to teach them at this level?

### III. Your Teaching Personality

1. Are you creative in your teaching?
2. Do the students feel free to talk to you about their problems?
3. As a teacher, are you yourself? Is your teaching a comfortable reflection of your personality?
4. Does the student have a sense of having accomplished something after the lesson?
5. Do you have a sense of having accomplished something after the lesson?
6. Do you feel totally involved in your teaching?
7. Are you enthusiastic? Do you think you have a real spark in every lesson?
8. Are you flexible as a person and as a teacher?
9. Do you communicate to the students accurately what you mean to say?
10. Do you admit when you are in the wrong, or do you project a false image of being perfect?
11. Would you teach the same way if you were being observed by someone?
12. Is your relationship with your student a good one?
13. Are you reaching your students?
14. If not, what can you do to get through to them?
15. Are you able to deal with occasional frustration?
16. Have you thought about the student as a person, not just a cello-machine that you see once a week?
17. Are you varying your style and approach to conform with the student, or do you treat your pupils as if they come to you in one mold?
18. Are you "getting inside the student's head," trying to understand what makes him/her "tick"?
19. Are you being too harsh?
20. Are you being too lenient?
21. Is there a rich sense of enjoyment in the lesson?
22. Do you use humor in the lesson?
23. Is the atmosphere of the lesson a positive one, or is it consistently negative?
24. How musical are you in your teaching?
25. Do you speak with a pleasing voice quality?
26. Does your teaching have energy? Are you dynamic?
27. Do you leave your problems at home when you step into a lesson?
28. Do your students trust you implicitly? Have you established the kind of relationship in

which they feel safe about following you into the unknown?

29. Are you working to improve your communication skills?
30. Do you keep a balance between holding their hands and pushing them off the diving board?
31. Do you really care about your teaching, or are you just doing it for the money?
32. Are you learning from your students?
33. Do you realize that if you are not changing for the better as a person, you are not changing for the better as a teacher?

(My thanks to Georgia Cowart and Jerry Curry for their “Teaching Mania” ideas!)



*Robert Jesselson is a Carolina Distinguished Professor at the University of South Carolina where he teaches cello and plays in the American Arts Trio. He was the National President of ASTA, the American String Teachers Association, from 2000-2002. During his tenure as President, he initiated the National Studio Teachers Forums (2000 and 2002), started the National String Project Consortium (with sites at 26 universities and grants of \$2.2 million), and began the planning for the first stand-alone ASTA National Convention in 2003. Jesselson is now the Executive Director of the National String Project Consortium.*

*Dr. Jesselson has performed in recital and with orchestras in Europe, Asia, South America, and the United States, and has participated in the Music Festivals at Nice, Granada, Santiago, Aspen, Spoleto and the Grand Tetons. His performance degrees*

*are from the Staatliche Hochschule fuer Musik in Freiburg, West Germany, from the Eastman School of Music, where he studied with Paul Katz, and the DMA from Rutgers where he studied with cellist Bernard Greenhouse. He has been principal cello of the South Carolina Philharmonic Orchestra, and the Orquesta-Sinfonica de Las Palmas, Spain. In 1983 Dr. Jesselson was in China for a six-month residency, one of the first Western cellists to visit that country. During that time he performed as soloist, gave master classes, and taught at several conservatories (including Beijing, Shanghai, and Canton).*

*Dr. Jesselson is former conductor of the USC University Orchestra and the Columbia Youth Orchestra. For 15 years he was the director of the USC String Project, building the program into one of the largest and most prominent string education programs in the country. His pioneering work on this program was recognized in an article in the New York Times in December, 2003. He is the recipient of the 1989 S.C. Arts Commission Artist Fellowship, the 1992 Verner Award, the 1995 Mungo Teaching Award, the 2002 Cantey Award for Outstanding Faculty, and the first SC ASTA Studio Teacher Award in 2005. Dr. Jesselson was the cello teacher at the S.C. Governor’s School for the Arts for 17 years. He recently returned from a European tour in which he performed in Berlin, Dresden, Leipzig and Prague. In December, 2001, he led a delegation of string players and teachers to Cuba to begin professional contact with Cuban musicians. In 2004 he taught for a semester at Sookmyung University in Korea. This summer Dr. Jesselson will be teaching cello at the Green Mountain Music Festival in Vermont.*



# Using Technology in the Private Studio

by Lorraine Combs

*On May 25, 2008, the ASTA MD/DC Chapter held its 2008 Annual Meeting. For the program after the meeting, I demonstrated how I use technology in my home private studio. This article is a recap of my presentation.*

Using “technology” in the private studio—whether it be the studio in your own home or the studio in your office at your school, conservatory, or university—is not a new idea. It’s just that nowadays the term “technology” means making use of a computer or some sort of digital gadget—a concept that, depending on the individual, might cause one to turn around and walk the other way, or will cause one to say, “Well, I’d like to know more, but I don’t know where to start.” Or one might even say, “Yes, I’m totally comfortable using a computer as a technology aid. I’m way ahead of Lorraine Combs. I’ve got tricks and tips up my sleeve that she doesn’t even mention and probably doesn’t even know about.”

But this presentation is not merely about using a computer—I’m going to mention some gadgets and gizmos that aren’t necessarily tied into the computer, and yet—they can be used with a computer, because computers are so flexible and versatile. It all depends on what the user wants, or wants to use, or wants to try out, just to see if something can be done a different way.

One of the first “technological” teaching/playing aids was the **metronome**! Think about it! It was invented in 1812 and patented in 1816. Teachers and performers have been using it for almost two centuries. It was sometimes ridiculed in its infancy, but whatever would we ever do without it today?

And *long* before that was the **mirror**! It’s not something that springs to mind as a teaching or playing aid, but musicians and teachers of music students have made use of it to develop a correct embouchure or a straight bow.

An old trick, perhaps almost as old as the mirror, that has been no doubt used for centuries by music teachers to help their students develop an accurate sense of pitch was the **drone note**. How well I remember my teacher playing a tonic note on his violin while I dutifully played a scale or arpeggio.

In the practice room, I would sit in front of the piano with my foot on the pedal sustaining a note while I practiced my scale, listening to how each note blended with the drone note.

You could even call the **tuning fork** a “technology” aid for musicians!

Listening to examples: This is a training aid we simply cannot omit. In olden times, the student would listen to his teacher perform the music he was learning, or go to a recital or concert to hear what he was striving to learn. What a godsend was the **phonograph**! What would we do without recorded performances of great artists and great orchestras? Right on the heels of the phonograph came radio and television broadcasts of performances. Today we have CDs, MP3 players such as the iPod, podcasts, YouTube—you name it!

And not many decades after the phonograph came the development of the **tape recorder** for home use.

And now, last of all, for the most time-honored and widely used teaching aid of all time, tada—the **accompanist**! We can hardly deem this concept as an “extra”—it’s unthinkable to consider teaching someone to play a musical instrument at all without playing along with the student, or playing a duet with the student, whether it be the same instrument as the student’s, or an accompanying instrument, such as a piano, guitar, or whatever. Teachers can be the accompanists themselves, or they may hire a separate accompanist for the studio.

I’ve mentioned these well-known aids we all make use of as teachers, so that those of you who might be newbies to technology will feel comfortable in learning new versions to old tricks that you already know about. Now, let’s have a look at some of the latest developments and improvements! The list will by no means be all-inclusive—these are simply a few things I have discovered that work for me.

**Metronome.** There are many different types of metronomes available in music stores and in music catalogs. It’s entirely possible to overlook a new one that we might prefer to the one we’ve gotten used to over the years. If you are recommending that one of

your students buy one, be sure to tell him to try it out first. If it emits a sort of electronic “beep,” he might not be able to hear it clearly over the sound of his instrument. For example, a click-click sound is more easily heard than a beep-beep sound when playing a violin. There are very small battery operated metronomes that clip onto a shirt collar. Some produce a vibrating “tingle” feeling when they are in your pocket or attached to your body. One of my favorites is a metronome app on my iPhone!

**Mirror.** A wonderful substitute for a mirror is a video camera. It doesn’t have to be a fancy one. Most of us have digital cameras these days. Often there is a video option that will allow the user to make short videos, complete with sound. My tiny little digital camera sometimes comes in handy when I’m helping a student draw a straight bow stroke. I simply put the camera in Video mode, have the student play a short selection, and then have him watch himself in the viewfinder immediately afterwards. He can see instantly that his bow was not traveling in a straight path. Another nice thing about a digital camera is that you can delete the video immediately, thus assuring the hapless student that you will never use that video as blackmail! I’ve also made use of a digital camera in still mode. If the student has a cell phone with a camera, use his phone to take a picture of his bow hand or left hand after you have formed it into the proper shape. Then he or his parents can refer to that photo during the week to be sure his setup is always correct. I’ve taken pictures of my students with my iPhone, and then e-mailed that photo to their home computers.

**Drone note.** An amazing CD, which has been advertised in the Union paper for over a decade now, is called TheTuningCD. It would be difficult for me to describe in my own words how amazingly well this works. Read about it at: [www.thetuningcd.com](http://www.thetuningcd.com). Recently, I was demonstrating this CD to an adult student, who is an organist and Finale user, who also just happened to decide to learn to play the violin. She thought she might be able to create a Finale file with many whole notes tied together, using an organ sound. At this writing, I haven’t heard if she tried it out yet, but to me, the idea just might work!

**Tuning fork.** Need I say more about this? The large numbers and varieties of digital tuners available to musicians is mind-boggling. I mentioned above that I have a metronome app on my iPhone. I also have a tuner app on my iPhone. It works like a charm.

**Phonograph.** What is your favorite way to listen to recorded music? Home stereo? Radio? TV? iPod? YouTube? Live streaming over your computer connection? However, let’s never forget the live performance! After all, this was the original way to listen to other musicians perform, and I think it’s still the best...

**Tape recorder.** Digital recorders continue to appear in stores and catalogs, each year becoming less and less expensive and easier to use. In the mid-1990’s, there appeared on the scene the MiniDisc recorder and player. I’m still a huge fan of MiniDisc technology, but it never captured the attention and imagination of the music world in the Western Hemisphere. Today, with the small sizes and ease of use of many digital recorders, almost anyone can make an instant recording. And yes, I even have a recorder app on my iPhone!

**Accompanist.** This is where all the fun comes in! When a student learns a piece, and then gets to perform it with another person or group, the effect on the student is magical! Playing along with other musicians is what makes most students want to keep practicing and getting better. It’s not surprising to see the huge numbers of accompaniment CD’s bound together with instrumental method books in music stores. The **Amazing SlowDowner** ([www.ronimusic.com](http://www.ronimusic.com)) is a software application that allows anyone to play along with any CD *at any speed*, or even *at any pitch*! I can put a violin CD into my computer, for instance a Sukuki performance, lower the pitch a perfect 5th, and my viola students can play the exact same piece in an appropriate viola key. Music notation software, such as **Finale** or **Sibelius**, can be used by the teacher to create accompaniment files or play-along files. Of course, there is often a steep learning curve involved in using these applications but, hey—you learned to play your instrument, you can learn to use the computer, too. Over the course of the past ten or twelve years, I have created personal files of all the Wohlfahrt etudes, all the Kayser etudes, two books of Mazas etudes, and half the Kreutzer etudes for violin. It’s a simple matter to transpose these into viola keys, too. You can make a CD of this type of file. Give one to your student for home practice, and help him learn an etude in warp speed for that important audition! An incredible digital accompaniment aid is **SmartMusic**, made by the same company that makes **Finale**. Do a search for it with your computer browser. The student himself should have access to a computer at home.

I hope that some of my ideas will inspire readers to try them, or come up with innovative “techie” aids of their own. Write to me about ways that you use technology, whether it is new and cutting edge, or older and tried and true. My contact info is on the inside front cover of this issue, or you can find me on the CONTACT US page of our new website: [www.asta.net](http://www.asta.net).



*Lorraine Combs is the Website Coordinator and does Stringendo Layout and Design for MD/DC Chapter. Read her bio on our new website: [www.asta.net](http://www.asta.net), on the Officers and Board of Directors page.*

**Please visit our new  
MD/DC website!  
[www.asta.net](http://www.asta.net)**



# Nominations for 2009 ASTA MD/DC Chapter Awards Teacher of the Year and Outstanding Service to Strings

Any MD/DC member may nominate another MD/DC member for an Award, to be presented at the Chapter's Annual Meeting on May 17, 2009. Use the information below to use as a guide in making your nomination. A member may nominate someone for either award, or may nominate two people, one for each award.

Send your nomination to MD/DC Chapter President, Dorée Huneven, either via e-mail or the post office. Her contact information can be found on the inside front cover of this issue of Stringendo.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Nominated for:

- Teacher of the Year
- Outstanding Service to Strings

Explain why you think your nominee deserves the award. How has this person contributed to the noble profession of string teaching, or how has this person contributed to the improvement of our ASTA Chapter?

Deadline for nominations is April 1, 2009. The MD/DC Executive Board will review all nominations and choose a winner for each award.



# MD/DC Chapter News

## We Welcome Our New Board Members!

**Sarah Cotteril** joins the Chapter Board as our new **Membership Chair**. She has a B.A. from Swarthmore College in English Literature and an M.F.A. in writing from the University of Iowa. She also has a B.A. in cello performance from the University of Maryland, Baltimore County. She has taught writing workshops, and for the past ten years has maintained a private studio for cello and piano in Silver Spring, Maryland.

**Alessandra Schneider** joins the Chapter Board as our new **ASTA-Suzuki Liaison**. She received her Master of Music in Violin Performance with a concentration in Suzuki String Pedagogy from the University of Maryland, under the instruction of Ronda Cole. Her B.M. in Instrumental Music Education from the University of Delaware certifies her to teach students K–12. Ale has also been trained in Music Mind Games (Unit 1) and has taken the Parent Effectiveness Training course. Her performance experience includes playing with the Dover Symphony, the Pthalo String Quartet, Perfect Harmony String Quartet, and Inscape Chamber Music Project. Past teaching includes the Delaware Community Music School and University of Maryland Suzuki Program. Currently, she teaches at the Academy of Music in Gaithersburg, as well as the Animato Suzuki Violin Program in College Park, of which she is a founding member.

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## Tamsen Beseke Shoulder Pad Workshop

*by Dorée Huneven*

On Saturday, October 18, 2008, Tamsen Beseke led a workshop to demonstrate the Acoustifoam shoulder rests, which she invented and patented. Ms. Beseke is an active soloist, chamber, studio, and orchestral musician. She is the first violin of the Avanti String Quartet, and a member of the Los Angeles Opera Orchestra. She maintains a private

violin and viola studio in Monrovia, California. The workshop was held in the living room of ASTA member Ronald Mutchnik's home, which has been recently converted into a ninety-six-seat concert hall! This made a perfect venue for Ms. Beseke to demonstrate her invention, whose launch into the shoulder pad market was a twenty-six-year journey of experimentation.

First, we heard a comparison of violin sound between a standard across-the-back shoulder pad and an Acoustifoam pad. The difference in resonance between use of the two pads was quite remarkable, with the Acoustifoam's structure actually seeming to free the violin tone, while the other shoulder pad with its feet clamping onto the sides of the violin back were very evidently dampening it.

The Acoustifoam pads come in eleven sizes, and can be put on in different configurations with rubber bands so that they let the student hold the violin comfortably and correctly. More information can be found at [www.acoustifoamshoulderrests.com](http://www.acoustifoamshoulderrests.com).

We thank Ronald Mutchnik for his generosity and contribution to our ASTA chapter.

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## Volunteers Needed

*by Judy Silverman*

The FMMC (Friday Morning Music Club) Foundation is hosting two major competitions in March 2009, and we need your help! Volunteers from previous years have talked about how moved they were to hear such incredible talent, and how happy they were to be part of these exciting events. Please take some time out of your busy schedule to join us—you'll have the opportunity to meet some of the world's most gifted young musicians!

### **Johansen International Competition (JIC)**

for Young String Players (ages 13–17)

Rehearsals: March 11, 2009, 8:30 A.M. to 5 P.M.

Semi-Finals: March 12–13, 2009, 8:30 A.M. to 5 P.M.

Finals: March 14, 2009, 8:30 A.M. to 5 P.M.

All events take place at the Sumner School and Museum located at 17th and M Street, NW,

Washington, DC. Volunteers are needed to work in two-hour slots (or more). Home-housing is also needed for these gifted teenagers, who come from as far away as Shanghai and Moscow! See the complete list of volunteer needs below.

### **Washington International Competition (WIC)**

for Strings (ages 18–28)

Semi-Finals: March 20–21, 2009, in two-hour slots, 8:30 A.M.- 5 P.M., at George Washington University

Finals: March 22, 2009, approximately 9 A.M.–4 P.M., at the Kennedy Center’s Terrace Theater

Both competitions need the following:

- Ushers, to hand out programs and make sure no one enters while contestants are playing.
- Volunteers to show contestants to their warm-up rooms and to the stage.
- Helpers in the reception area, to greet contestants and answer questions.
- Page turners.
- **Hosts!** to host contestants during the competition, and transport them to and from the competition sites.

JIC: March 9–March 15

WIC: March 19–March 23

JIC only: Someone to help replenish water and snacks as needed.

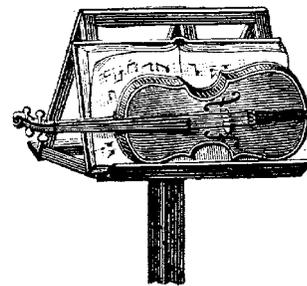
WIC only: Someone to bring coffee for the judges, and water for the contestants on the mornings of March 20–21.

WIC only: Monitors, to make sure judges stay on schedule.

JIC: Contact Judy Silverman:  
s.judith@verizon.net; or 301-871-7492.

WIC: Contact Immanuela Gruenberg:  
igruenberg@yahoo.com

*Note:* Please indicate the days & times you are available to help, and provide your contact information (e-mail and phone number).



# The Lighter Side



Refrain means don't do it. A refrain in music is the part you better not try to sing.

A virtuoso is a musician with real high morals.

Beethoven wrote music even though he was deaf. He was so deaf he wrote loud music. He took long walks in the forest even when everyone was calling him. I guess he could not hear so good. Beethoven expired in 1827 and later died from this.

Henry Purcell is a well known composer few people have ever heard of.

Aaron Copland is one of your most famous contemporary composers. It is unusual to be contemporary. Most composers do not live until they are dead.

An opera is a song of bigly size.

In the last scene of Pagliacci, Canio stabs Nedda who is the one he really loves. Pretty soon Silvio also gets stabbed, and they all live happily ever after.

When a singer sings, he stirs up the air and makes it hit any passing eardrums. But if he is good, he knows how to keep it from hurting.

Music sung by two people at the same time is called a duel.

I know what a sextet is but I had rather not say.

A good orchestra is always ready to play if the conductor steps on the odium.

Most authorities agree that music of antiquity was written long ago.

My very best liked piece of music is the Bronze Lullaby.

My favorite composer is Opus.

Instruments come in many sizes, shapes and orchestras.

You should always say celli when you mean there are two or more cellos.

Another name for kettle drums is timpani. But I think I will just stick with the first name and learn it good.

The double bass is also called the bass viol, string bass, and bass fiddle. It has so many names because it is so huge.

When electric currents go through them, guitars start making sounds. So would anybody.

Last month I found out how a clarinet works by taking it apart. I both found out and got in trouble.

Question: Is the saxophone a brass or a woodwind instrument? Answer: Yes.

The concertmaster of an orchestra is always the person who sits in the first chair of the first violins. This means that when a person is elected concertmaster, he has to hurry up and learn how to play a violin real good.

For some reason, they always put a treble clef in front of every line of violin music. You just watch.

I can't reach the brakes on this piano!

Anyone who can read all the instrument notes at the same time gets to be the conductor.

Instrumentalist is a many-purposed word for many player-types.

Music instrument has a plural known as orchestra.

I would like for you to teach me to play the cello. Would tomorrow or Friday be best?

Just about any animal skin can be stretched over a frame to make a pleasant sound once the animal is removed.